

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 8993

DELIVER MORNING SEP 6

FOR NEA/IRN-NAAS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUN, IR
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN--ATHERTON APPEARANCE

REF: STATE 219580

1. WE FIND REFTEL DRAFT STATEMENT EXCELLENT IN SUBSTANCE AND APPROACH. FOLLOWING ARE FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR UPDATING OR MODIFYING STATEMENT IN LIGHT OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US: (SECTIONS OF SPEECH ARE IDENTIFIED BY REFTEL SECTION NUMBER AND PARAGRAPH).

2. IN SECTION 3, PARA 4, SUGGEST CHANGING PARENTHETICAL EXPRESSION ON PERCENTAGE OF LITERACY TO READ: "(PROBABLY ONE HALF OF THE IRANIAN POPULATION IS STILL ILLITERATE, MOST OF THEM IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.)" IN PARA 6, SAME SECTION, REGARDING NUMBER OF WORKERS BENEFITTING FROM STOCK PROGRAM, GOI USED FIGURE 273,000 THREE WEEKS AGO. SUGGEST CHANGING NEXT TO LAST SENTENCE OF PARA 6 TO READ: "THE MOST RECENT ADDITION TO THE REFORM PROGRAM TOOK PLACE LAST YEAR WHEN THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT SET IN MOTION A STOCK DIVESTURE PROGRAM UNDER WHICH UP TO 49 PERCENT OF STOCK IN A PARTICULAR INDUSTRY WILL BE OFFERED TO THE WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND FARMERS OF IRAN."

3. IN SECTION 4, 2ND PARA FROM BOTTOM, CHANGE MIDDLE SENTENCE TO READ: "PLOTS TO KIDNAP THE EMPRESS OF
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IRAN AND THE CROWN PRINCE WERE UNCOVERED AND SEVERAL EFFORTS

TO MURDER THE SHAH WERE MADE."

4. IN FINAL PARAGRAPH SECTION 4, REPHRASE LAST SENTENCE TO READ "WE DO KNOW THAT ELEMENTS REPRESENTING AT LEAST ONE OF THESE GROUPS WERE INVOLVED IN THE MURDER OF TWO AMERICAN COLONELS LAST YEAR IN TEHRAN."

5. IN SECTION 5, BELIEVE PRESENTATION WOULD BE STRENGTHENED BY ELIMINATION OF FOLLOWING SENTENCES IN PARA 5: "I DO NOT CONDONE SUCH TREATMENT, IF IT OCCURS, IN THE IRANIAN SYSTEM OR ANY OTHER SYSTEM. I SIMPLY MUST REITERATE AGAIN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHARGES. MOST OF THE CHARGES OF TORTURE ARE AT LEAST TWO OR THREE YEARS OLD. "BELIEVE ALSO FINAL SENTENCE SAME PARA, WHICH READS "HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO INFORMATION OF CASES WHERE THESE PENALTIES HAVE BEEN IMPOSED." SHOULD BE ELIMINATED.

6. IN PARA 7, SECTION 5, IN ADDITION TO RELEASE OF 307 PRISONERS CONVICTED IN MILITARY COURTS, WE MIGHT NOTE THAT 1797 PRISONERS CONVICTED IN CIVILIAN COURTS FOR VARIOUS OFFENSES WERE ALSO RELEASED TO COMMEMORATE "GOLDEN JUBILEE" OF PAHLAVI DYNASTY. MOREOVER, EARLIER THIS YEAR, A TOTAL OF 247 OTHER PRISONERS CONVICTED BY MILITARY TRIBUNALS WERE ALSO PARDONED AND RELEASED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

7. IN SECTION 6, FIRST PARA, FINAL SENTENCE SHOULD READ: "IN FACT, IN ONE RECENT CABINET TWO MINISTERS WERE EX-TUDEH PARTY MEMBERS." BELIEVE FOLLOWING PHRASE "MR. BUTLER'S STATISTICS ARE PROBABLY WITHIN THE BALLPARK BUT" SHOULD BE ELIMINATED AND REST OF SENTENCE BE RETAILORED TO READ: "LET ME ADD THAT A RECENT AMERICAN JOURNALIST FROM A MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPER VISITED AN IRANIAN PRISON AND WAS INTRODUCED TO AND INTERVIEWED A NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHOM OPPONENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN HAVE LONG CLAIMED HAD DIED IN PRISON FROM TORTURE."

8. IN PARA 4, SECTION 6, SECOND SENTENCE SHOULD READ: "A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO IRAQI TERRORISTS WHO HIJACKED A PLANE TO IRAN WERE TRIZB AND EXECUTED UNDER IRANIAN LAW."

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9. IN SECTION 8 ON QUESTION REGARDING BARAHENI BELIEVE FOLLOWING COULD WELL BE ADDED: " AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH AMERICAN NEWSMEN AT NOWSHAR, IRAN, AUGUST 6, THE SHAH POINTED OUT THAT BARAHENI HAD AT ONE TIME WORKED FOR SAVAK. SAVAK OFFICERS CONFIRM THIS AND INDICATED BARAHENI HIMSELF PROPOSED COLLABORATION IN EXCHANGE FOR FREEDOM WHILE IN JAIL FOR COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE ILLEGAL UNDER IRANIAN LAW. THIS COOPERATION MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE FACT THAT

BARAHENI WAS NOT ACCEPTED INTO IRANIAN DISSIDENT ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE U.S. UNTIL COMPARATIVELY RECENTLY."

10. WITH RESPECT TO QUESTION REGARDING PUNISHMENT FOR PERSONS
CARRYING OUT TORTURE (STATE 218124), KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES
HAVE BEEN OUT OF TOWN OR UNAVAILABLE FOR PAST TWO DAYS. ASSUME
DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES CATCH 22 NATURE OF QUESTION. IF RELIABLE
INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE WILL SUBMIT BY IMMEDIATE CABLE.
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